10: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1945 AP1/Burma
Karen AP7

feel safer there than with any other people in the country. 152
When Karens are convinced of one's honesty and truth- [672]
fulness and genuine friendliness they will prove themselves to be true friends and they will inconvenience themselves no end to make that friendship good.

In common with some of the other Hill peoples of 633
south-eastern Asia, they have a great love for music. Their own native music is built on the pantonic scale. It consists of weird tunes in a minor key that are plain- 634
tive, sad and tremulous. They use the harp, and make crude instruments resembling the violin out of bamboo, and a kind of xylophone played with two small mallets. The drum is also used in various forms.

The educated Karens, most of whom are Christians, 533
have almost entirely abandoned their old plaintive native 177
airs for the happier Western music. It began with the hymns of the Christian Church of which a fine and large collection has been translated into both the Sgaw and Pwo languages, and which they delight to sing. In addition to these, the young people love picking up the popular airs sung in musicales and in the cinemas. It is not uncommon to hear these songs even in remote villages.

During the past quarter century there has grown up a new music among the people, mostly among the Christians. Every Christian village has its choir. They love to sing together. The leaders of these choirs have taken Western airs and have combined them with touches of their native music and composed new songs for them. Hundreds of these have been published by mimeograph and a few of them have shown real musical ability on the part of their composers. The Karens have, as a rule, soft and velvety voices that lend themselves to good music.

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

blood. They then consult the chicken's thigh-bones to see whether or not the auspices are favorable. If they are favorable, they say:

" 'We will grow old together;
We will visit each other's houses;
We will go up each other's steps.'

"The visitor then kills a hog or a fowl and performs the same rites on the other. On consulting the chicken bones, if the fowl's bones are unfavorable, he says:

" 'We will die separately;
We will go separately;
We will work separately;
We will not visit each other's houses;
We will not go up each other's steps;
We will not see each other but for a short time.' "

If the auspices are favorable, the two agree that they have entered into this relation of "do." They regard themselves pledged to each other as friends and bound to help each other in any manner necessary as long as they shall live. They call each other only by the name "do." In seasons of famine one aids the other to the extent of his ability. In case evil is spoken of one, the other defends him, saying: "That man is my 'do.' Do not speak evil of him. To do so is to speak evil of me. I do not wish to hear it."

Formerly it was the custom for many to multiply their "dos" in numerous villages, so that they might receive hospitality wherever they went and, in case of the planning of forays against some village, the "dos" might learn of it from their adopted brethren in other such communities. It is said that "dos" rarely quarreled, but remained faithful to each other. The institution seemed to exert a favorable influence on wild Karen society. Finally, Dr. Mason adds: "It may be compared to Masonry with its secrets."

The relationship named "tho" is formed by two men wishing to become brothers, by each drawing a little blood from his forearm, mingling it in the same cup, and drinking therefrom. Formerly the chicken bones were inspected in connection with this ceremonial, although nowadays they are not always used. This is a lifelong relationship and binds each to defend the other. From the time of the mutual adoption each calls the other "tho," and each speaks of the other by the same name.

The third relationship, "mwi," is one that may be mutually assumed by two young men, two young women, or a young man

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

608 572 and a young woman. If the relationship is formed by the latter, they probably have met at a funeral celebration and become interested in each other. The ceremonial requires each of the pair to twist seven strands of cotton into a cord to serve as a necklace. The youth first puts his cord over the young woman's head, taking great care not to touch her head-dress or person. In similar fashion the young woman slips her cord over the young man's head. Probably a formula was originally repeated in confirmation of this dual action. If so, it has vanished together with any consultation of the chicken bones that may have taken place. The cords must be worn seven days without being broken or removed, lest the agreement be made void. Thereafter they address each other only as "mwi." The relation thus established does not allow one to take any liberties with the other, but rather tends to the safeguarding of each as if they were brother and sister. The relationship is supposed to be for life, but does not, of course, prevent the separation of the two by a greater or less distance. In such an event, when one goes into the neighborhood of the other, a present is taken along for one's "mwi." Often mementoes or gifts are exchanged when the compact is first made. [431] It is current usage for school friends to call one another "mwi" without any ceremony, but simply in token of kindly regard.

THE GUEST-CHAMBER AND CLUB-ROOM

574 576 In the earlier days among the Karen of the hills the "blaw" was an important feature of village life.[1] It is still retained, although it seems to have lost some of its former significance. It [688] is the guest and club-room reserved in the central part of the village-house. Strangers coming in for a visit or passing by on their journey are entertained here. Such a convenience was quite necessary in the days when the tabu of the "Bgha" feast was strictly observed, and no outsider was allowed to enter the family-rooms. My party and I have been entertained in the "blaw" of villages in the Pegu Hills on the Tharrawaddy side, while on tour. In one village, which had adopted some Buddhist practices, along one side of the guest-room extended a high shelf upon which stood a small image of Gautama Buddha, with the usual offerings of paper flags and wilted leaves and flowers. At the back of the room was the raised dais on which I spread my bed, but I was pre-

[1] In Sir J. G. Scott's *Burma, A Handbook*, p. 123, this institution is referred to under the name of "haw." See also *Upper Burma Gazetteer*, Vol. I, Pt. I, 330, ff.